

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Weed Instrument Company, Inc.

Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center

Weed Instrument Wins at Quality, Cost and Speed

Client Profile:

Weed Instrument Company, Inc., provides a complex and diverse product line of highly engineered temperature sensing, fiber optic networking and nuclear qualified instrumentation. The company name was created when the company founder wanted his firm to "grow like a Texas weed," so he told his first customer "make the check out to Weed Instrument." Weed Instrument employs 83 people at its Round Rock, Texas, facility.

Situation:

Weed Instrument realized that they needed to provide a well synchronized, streamlined experience for their many customers, offering the complex products that customers valued while eliminating operational production and transaction complexity that added undesirable cost to order processing and product fabrication. The Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, had helped Weed Instrument in the past to consolidate their separate commercial, aerospace and nuclear quality systems into a single quality manual that was compliant to AS9100, Canadian quality standards and United States nuclear regulatory agency standards. The quality system drove elimination of variance and reinforced production work method standardization. Once again, Weed Instrument called upon TMAC for assistance.

Solution:

TMAC assisted Weed Instrument to build on this quality foundation through implementation of Lean Manufacturing methods throughout the organization. Beginning with Lean Principles training for every employee, Weed Instrument rapidly matured to apply value stream mapping and elimination of non-customer valued work through monthly kaizen events.

Results:

- * Over 900 percent increase in capacity while reducing costs and investing in new equipment for a target product line.
- * 45 percent reduction in transportation/ material handling distance for a different target product.
- * 20 percent reduction in labor cost of a target product through creation of a dedicated work cell.
- * 55 percent reduction in lead time for a third targeted product through the step-by-step analysis of customer order engineering and material planning processes.

Testimonial:

"Initially there was some internal concern about allocation of people resources. Now, we are committed to having every single employee at Weed Instrument participate in a kaizen improvement event embracing change has truly become our company culture."

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Troy Johnson, Vice President, Operations